

# RACKETS DIVISION

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NORTON, DONALD P.



By American now living in Vancouver

# CIA link claimed with three in Garrison probes

**Canadian Press**  
VANCOUVER, Aug. 7 — A link between the United States Central Intelligence Agency and three principals in investigations of former president John F. Kennedy's assassination is claimed by an American now living in Vancouver.

Donald P. Norton, 35, told The Sun in an interview Saturday he encountered Lee Harvey Oswald, Clay Shaw and David Ferrie while he was on the payroll of the CIA.

Oswald was named by the Warren Commission as the lone assassin of President Kennedy in November, 1963.

Clay Shaw, a New Orleans businessman, has been indicted by a grand jury on charges of conspiring to kill the President following an investigation by District Attorney Jim Garrison of New Orleans.

David Ferrie, who died in February, was a central figure in Garrison's investigation. Garrison claims the assassination resulted from a complex conspiracy involving paramilitary groups linked with the CIA and disident Cuban exiles.

"Norton first came to see The Sun July 3," says the newspaper. "Since then many details of Norton's story have been confirmed. But the authenticity of his central claims defy verification by normal newspaper investigation."

Norton, a musician, is a native of Columbus, Ga., until late last year he operated his own record promotion and production company in Albany, Ga. He said that Ferrie, a pilot, was his contact man in 1963 on a

He said the money was to be used to support the revolutionary activities of Fidel Castro. He knew Ferrie as Hugh Pharris.

"This man, known to me as Hugh Pharris, delivered to me the case which contained the money I was to take to the CIA contact in Havana," Norton said.

He added that he met Shaw in Alabama in August, 1962, before a CIA assignment to Monterrey, Mexico.

He said Shaw was with a man who gave him an attache case containing about \$50,000 to be delivered to a "Harvey Lee" in Monterrey in exchange for another case containing documents.

"During the publicity of the assassination when the man known as Lee Oswald was re-

vealed to the public, I almost immediately recognized him as being the same Harvey Lee I had met in September, 1962, in Monterrey, to whom I delivered the money.

"I believe this was for a revolutionary-type activity against Castro. This was a CIA assignment."

Norton said his instructions were to make his way from Monterrey to Calgary, Alta., where he made himself known

publicly. He was then approached and turned over the documents.

"My instructions were to get established in Calgary and I did by becoming very prominent on local television and playing for one of the well-known restaurants in Calgary. The man contacted me."

The Sun says Norton refused to identify his Calgary contact and referred to him only as "a certain well-known oil company employee."

"Norton's activities in Calgary, apart from his CIA dealings, have been largely contained by 'The Sun,' says the newspaper.

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Felling

Herewith a transcript of my notes of an interview in Jim Garrison's office on July 16, 1967 with Donald P. Norton. By way of background, Norton is a man who claims to have been employed by the CIA from 1958 to 1966. Until a few days ago he has been hiding in Vancouver, British Columbia because, as he puts it, he has information that would be helpful to District Attorney Garrison's case, but which would be very incriminating of the Central Intelligence Agency. Norton has contacted Garrison via a Vancouver newspaper reporter named John Taylor, of the Vancouver Sun, and late last week Garrison and Norton made telephone contact after which Garrison dispatched chief Assistant District Attorney Charles Ward to Vancouver for a personal interview. Ward was significantly impressed with Norton's story, that he returned to New Orleans with Norton so that the witness could testify before Garrison. Ward's description of the witness on return to New Orleans is that he is an obvious homosexual but appears to be an extremely intelligent witness. Norton explained to Ward that he was coerced by the CIA to join their operation in fear of exposure as a homosexual, that he was offered money to inform on other homosexuals and that he did this, starting in 1958 at Fort Benning, Ga.

The essence of Norton's testimony lies in the fact that he swears that he had made contact for the CIA at two different times with David Ferrie and Lee Harvey Oswald. It is Norton's conviction, therefore, that both Ferrie and Oswald during this period were also employed by the CIA, although he, Norton, at no time saw Ferrie and Oswald together and has no information that the two men at any time knew one another. Norton has told Ward that he is extremely frightened of the CIA, and therefore has been hiding out in Canada, but he wants to get this off his chest and is willing to testify in court and is willing to prepare for this testimony by taking a lie detector test.

Before meeting Norton we listened to part of a tape that Ward had made with the witness in Vancouver. It describes Norton as being aged 35, a native of Griffin, Ga.



His mother and father still live in Georgia, but have moved to Columbus. He told Ward that he was first contacted by the CIA at Fort Benning in 1957. It was in 1958 that he contacted Ferrie, whom he knew as Hugh Pharris (spelled either Pharris, or Farris, or possibly Ferris). The meeting took place at the Atlanta airport, at which time Ferrie turned over a sum of money for Norton to transport to Cuba.

Norton told Ward further that another CIA assignment took him to Monterrey, Mexico in September of 1962, where he met a man identified as Harvey Lee. Norton swears this man fits the description, and he is certain of this identification, of Lee Harvey Oswald. He says he delivered money to Harvey Lee for revolutionary activity against Castro.

Norton testified further that on two occasions he has seen a man he knows to be Clay Shaw, although he has never met him. One meeting was at a country club in Albany, Georgia, the other was at the Domino Lounge in Atlanta.

By way of background, Norton was born January 23, 1932. He was educated in Georgia; he entered the Air Force in 1949 in October with the understanding he would be sent to the Air Force Band school in Washington. A musician, a self-described TV personality, a man who plays the organ, Norton went to Washington where he not only went to school, but played in the Air Force Band. However, by 1952, he became unhappy over "personal involvements" as he describes them in the Air Force and was discharged and returned to Georgia. He says that while in the Air Force he was found guilty of what he describes as an "indiscretion", and was sentenced to six months in a federal institution.

Back in Georgia, he pursued his musical education, attended a music conservatory, where he got a bachelor's, and then a master's, degree.

In 1957 he got a job playing at the officers' club at Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia, and while playing there, he was approached by the intelligence agency. This



he says was in the middle of 1957. He said further that at parties for which he played he met generals and other high officials, and that the man who approached him for the CIA said "we want to know who does what to whom", the obvious implication being that it would be his duty to ferret out homosexuals in high military places. At first, says Norton, he refused, but the indiscretion for which he was convicted was used against him and as a means of coercion, and this, along with the offer of \$500 a month, convinced Norton that he should accept the job. He says he continued this "witch hunting" assignment through early 1958, when the colonel who employed him at the officers' club was charged with embezzlement. He then moved to Atlanta and played at the officers' club only on week ends, and his new employer, the new secretary of the officers' club, he is convinced was a government agent. During the period he continued to turn over information about homosexuals, saying he had proof based on experience.

Apparently in early '58, by February or March, Norton had completed the assignment at Fort Benning, and he was living in Atlanta full-time. It was then that he had a phone call from the contact man who asked if he might like to take a trip to Cuba. He accepted, thinking it might be fun. It was then that he went to Atlanta, where he met Hugh Pharris. Pharris gave him a sample case of phonograph records, which he was to take to Carlo Media, a Cuban television star. Media, he claims, was also working for the CIA at this time against the regime of Battista.

Norton describes Hugh Pharris as a man, who though he was wearing sunglasses and therefore could not be positively identified by his facial features, but a man who was wearing a very sloppy wig, a man who he is certain was the late David Ferrie. To substantiate this he says there was a young lady with him, a young lady named Carlotta Roth, who at the time was working as a dancer at the Domino Lounge in Atlanta.

Norton says that Pharris said to him "it" was in the case, and Norton knew that "it" was \$150,000 that he was to deliver to Media. After he made the delivery he



returned to Georgia via Miami and New York and reported in Atlanta to his CIA contact.

His next assignment was to infiltrate the Fulton County jail, where he was placed in the same cell with a Robert Bolling, who had been accused of dynamiting a synagogue in Atlanta. There are little further details on this assignment except Norton's speculation that Bolling was not convicted of the bombing, but of this he is not sure.

After that there are a number of other CIA assignments, most of them to determine the existence of homosexuals in government jobs.

In 1960 Norton says he went to New Orleans on a pleasure trip, and there he went to a club called the My-O-My, which is a homosexual hangout, and at the club he saw the man he recognized and will identify as Hugh Pharris, or David Ferrie. He says he did not talk to the man, since he did not know his real name.

The following are notes on an interview with Norton. First, however, it should be noted that the man's physical appearance and his behavior indicate at a glance his sexual nature. A man of rather delicate features, slightly overweight, he is extremely nervous, a chain smoker, which may well be explained by the fact that he is indeed frightened. On the other hand, he is a fast-talking, well rehearsed witness, although his testimony is often confusing due to his penchant for inconsequential gossip. He has a very inflated ego about his musical talents and his ability to decipher weaknesses of others. He describes himself as a passive homosexual who is really a bisexual, although the latter terminology must be considered doubtful. On observation it must be stated that a man of such obvious homosexual tendencies would be employed by the intelligence agency, but, as he described the nature of his work, this was exactly the reason they hired him.

He describes the reason for going to work for the agency as two-fold. One, "they had something on me", he says, and two, "the money was good." He says he was



only paid on an assignment-by assignment basis, and that he received his assignments by phone from a man he could only identify as "The Captain". He is not able to give the real name of his immediate superior. All during the time he worked for the agency, he never heard the term "CIA" by the initials used to describe the agency. When first contacted, it was stated that they wanted him to work for the Central Intelligence Agency, but that was the last reference to the company.

He says he was quite insulated from other CIA operatives, that he only knows five or six people to have worked for the agency. This makes it all the more significant, ~~if it turns out to be true~~ that he came into contact with both Ferrie and Oswald. *But it is possible.*

He again described his meetings with Ferrie as he went to the Atlanta airport, and left a message by page for Ferrie and waited from between 12 noon and 2 P.M. at the ticket counter of Eastern Airlines. While there, he was approached by Ferrie, and they talked about his holiday in Cuba. Ferrie said "here are your samples; 'it' is in the jackets."

Then in September 1962, after Castro had taken over Cuba, he was given the assignment to take \$50,000 to the Hotel Yamajel in Monterray, Mexico. He drove to Monterray in his own 1956 Buick and registered at the hotel under his own name.

It should be noted here that Norton's knowledge of the Cuban policy of this country is extremely vague. He is able to theorize as if it were some new revelation that the United States or the CIA was behind the overthrow of Battista, but then when Castro threw out the CIA, it in turn, and the U.S. government turned against Castro. He does however say that Carlo Media, the CIA-employed Cuban is now in a Castro prison, so he thinks. He says that after the Castro overthrow his only assignment involving Cuba was this courier trip to Monterray to turn over \$50,000 to Harvey Lee. This in itself must seem strange, since why would a man whose job with



the company is to ferret out homosexuals suddenly and uniquely be picked for a courier mission to Monterray, Mexico, never to be involved in the Cuban situation again.

At any rate, after he registered at the Yamajel Hotel, Norton says he was immediately met by Harvey Lee, before he even was able to go to his room. They went into the bar and sat at the bar where they had a couple of beers. Norton's only recollection of the meeting is that Harvey Lee, whom he describes as a man of slight build who was dressed casually, who appeared identical to Oswald except for the fact that his hair was not as thin as the hair of the man he saw in pictures identified as Lee Harvey Oswald. His only other recollection of the meeting is that Oswald refused to look him in the eye. He did however ask Harvey Lee where he came from, and the answer, he thinks, was New Orleans. Norton says he delivered a case of money to Harvey Lee and in return was given a case of documents contained in manila envelopes, the nature of which he does not know.

Norton says he then drove from Monterray to Calgary, Alberta, Canada, where he became a television personality and where he played in a bar at the Georgian Terrace restaurant. There he was met by a man he can only describe as resembling Oral Roberts, the evangelist, and says this man came to him and used the code identification "the weather is very warm in Tulsa", whereupon Norton said the documents were in his room. They arranged to meet in the parking lot, where the contact was sitting in a Volkswagon. Norton turned over the documents to him.

After leaving Calgary, Norton telephoned Mr. Albert Penn of Five Points, Ala. He knows Penn as an older man, says he is a homosexual who once made a pass at Norton, and also a man from whom Norton got instructions. He says Penn told him to go to Boston, which he did. He again called Penn and told him he was in a pay station. Penn asked for the phone number of the pay station and told him to wait there and ten minutes later three FBI agents arrested him, and he was charged with armed robbery of Albert Penn. This was in December 1962. He says that Alabama



authorities came to take him back to Alabama, where was able to prove that the money Penn claimed he had stolen was actually given to Norton in the form of two personal checks. He says he was acquitted of the charge, and that he never saw Penn again.

In 1965 Norton says he went to Albany, Ga. He was again contacted by "The Captain". Identification of the Captain, to the best of his knowledge, is a Del Merton (possible spelling).

It was in Albany in 1966 that he first saw a man he now knows to be Clay Shaw. He says that he saw Shaw talking to a James A. Gray, an extreme Georgia right-winger and political power, and this meeting reportedly took place at a country club known as the Double Gate Country Club in Albany. It was soon after that, according to Norton, that Gray offered to get him established in Albany by lending him \$6,000. He took the loan, which was paid back for him by way of a surreptitious payment, presumably by the CIA.

Further description of Gray, whom Norton describes as dangerous. He says that Gray was the moneyman behind a night club in Albany called the Continental Room, the ostensible owner of which was a man named Gordon Leonard. Norton claims that one night he was at the bar and that Gray was nearby and was talking drunkenly about Beau<sup>Bo?</sup> Calloway, the Republican candidate for governor of Georgia. Norton contends that Calloway campaigned on two issues, one, who killed John F. Kennedy and why, and two, why Viet Nam. It was in reference to the Calloway campaign that Norton heard Gray say, "Some candidates ask too many questions. If a president can get it, so can a gubernatorial candidate." Other comments by Norton about Gray were that he was extremely anti-negro and that he spent a great deal of time in New Orleans, and finally that he doesn't think Gray enters into the CIA picture; although he had made the \$6,000 loan, it was from another man, presumably a CIA contact that he money to repay the loan.

He says that one of his jobs in Albany was to do some recruiting for the CIA.



He was told for example to enlist the services of an ex-Marine who is on the police force in Albany and whose name is John Stickler. He was also told to recruit a friend of his named Jack C. White, Jr., but in neither case, nor in any other, did he actually follow through on the recruiting.

Shortly after the time he saw Shaw talking to Gray at the Double Gate Country Club, Norton says he saw Clay Shaw again, this time drinking at the Domino Bar in Atlanta.

Norton's last assignment for the CIA came in late November 1966 when he was told to go to Freeport, Grand Bahama Island, where he would get names of homosexuals working for the missile tracking station on Grand Bahama. He says he was there about a week completing the assignment, after which he returned to Miami and called his contact there, a Mr. Green. He says that Mr. Green told him that something was brewing in New Orleans and that he, Norton, should take a long quiet vacation. Norton claims he had no idea as to the nature of the New Orleans development, and that he had no idea why he was being told to take this vacation. It worried him a great deal, so he went on a long circuitous trip attempting to find out what was happening, why he had been summarily dismissed, so to speak. He suspected that he had done something wrong but did not know the nature of his misdeed. He went first to Key West to contact a CIA friend there, but was unsuccessful. He returned to Miami but was unable to reach Green again. He then drove to Savannah, and by this time he says he was really frightened. He got in a plane and flew to Dallas and tried to contact a man named Stanley Walsh, whom he had known in Houston, a man he describes as a former trapeze artist, a former paratrooper who had been working for the agency. He was unable to reach Walsh. From Dallas he went to Los Angeles and then San Francisco, where he contacted an old friend, a chief warrant officer and the band director at Fort Mason. He says that Haines has no CIA connection but that he went to him to tell his troubles.



After San Francisco he flew to Honolulu where he had two CIA contact friends. One, a retired naval captain, a doctor who is now in private practice, whose name he does not wish to divulge, told Norton simply to forget about the problem. His second contact is a man he describes as "a big queer" who is in the narcotics business, is also in the CIA. His name is ~~Bill Rusk~~ Bill Rusk, who comes from Texas, who has Mafia connections, who is an alcoholic, who runs a liquor store in the pioneer hotel, told Norton, "Join the party or get out."

After that Norton says he came back to this country and it was then that he went off to Canada to hide out.

There are a few other names that Norton gives as possible people to corroborate his story, but they won't be of much help. It is interesting to note that one of the flaws of the story is that there is no one who is likely to either corroborate or admit they ever met Norton. They either are people like Stanley Penn who have reason to dislike him, to say the least, or they are CIA agents who were using phony names, who cannot be contacted because, Norton claims, he has destroyed all phone numbers of his contacts (and this may be the most suspicious element of the whole story), or they are people who either cannot be found or who are dead. An example of the latter case is a man he claims was working in Columbus, Georgia in 1962 named E.B. Worrell, described as a local Republican leader, member of the CIA, who was posing as a bachelor, although it turned out he had a wife and family in California. Mr. Worrell somewhere along the line committed suicide. Another case of a corroborative witness who could be helpful is one Carlotta Roth, the ex-dancer who Norton claims was with him when he met Ferrie in the Atlanta airport. Though he says she comes from a well established family in Charleston, S.C., he says it would be almost impossible for us to locate her. And then, when asked if there are any others, he says there are six people who can link me (Norton) to Ferrie and Oswald. He says two of these people are former Army enlisted men and one is a retired Marine colonel in Albany, Georgia,



and one is the girl Carlotta Roth, and the other two he has neglected to name. In the case of the Army enlisted man and the Marine colonel he declines thus far to reveal their names or whereabouts.

Finally we threw the one question that might evoke a reaction, due to the suspicion on my part that it is inconceivable that people would come forward at this late a date and testify that they knew Lee Harvey Oswald in the CIA. Norton was asked why, after the assassination, on realizing that the accused assassin was the man he had known as Harvey Lee, a CIA contact in Monterrey, Mexico, Norton shot back with the best possible answer in which he said rather heatedly, "I don't believe, and I never believed, that Oswald shot President Kennedy." When asked why he was so certain, he answered, "Because he was with the CIA. And if he did it, then you'd better believe the whole CIA was involved."

Despite this ability to field questions, it is a final observation that the witness bears further checking to determine his reliability. Despite his willingness to testify openly in court (and it must be noted here that this is in direct conflict to his fear of being detected by the people for whom he allegedly worked) and despite the glib presentation of his story, we must consider it a dubious one until some corroboration can be made.